

# Model Store Policies

*A Guide to Developing Responsible Business  
Practices for Off-Sale Licensees*



Gray Davis, Governor  
Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary  
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# Introduction

Your business is very important. It is valuable to you, your community, and to the State's economy. You have invested your time, energy and financial resources. Your business offers a place that meets local shopping needs and provides jobs. And did you know the 72,000 liquor licenses in California make up about 7% of the State's one million businesses? Sales and excise taxes on alcoholic beverages generate over \$500 million a year in State revenues!

The best way to protect your valued business is through responsible business practices. Responsible business practices can help reduce your risk of criminal or ABC charges, and civil lawsuits. They also promote profitability and ensure a comfortable and safe environment for customers.

You should document your responsible business practices in the form of written store policies. If you have none, each employee may have his or her own idea about what the rules are, what they mean, and when they should be applied.

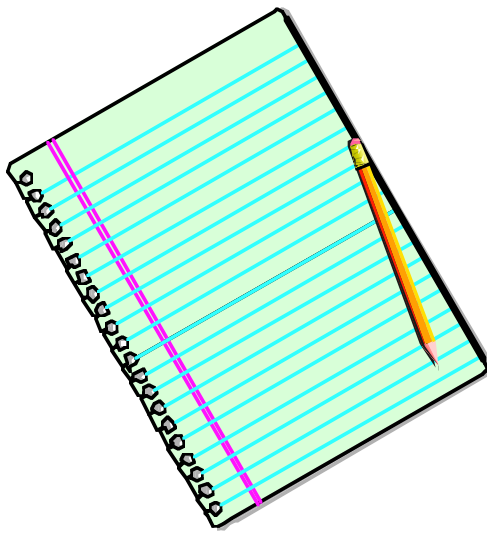
This pamphlet will assist you in developing your own store policies. You may want to use our "Model Store Policies" or adapt them to fit your needs. In the long term, the responsible business will build a strong and loyal customer base.



## Guidelines for Writing Policies

- You may have any company policy that does not conflict with existing laws (for example, no discrimination).
- It is always good to obtain ideas from your managers and employees when writing new policies. They will be more supportive of policies they helped to create.
- Make sure policies are clear and specific.
- Provide all employees with a copy of the policies.
- To ensure that employees understand their duties, have them sign an Employee Responsibility Statement (see sample on last page). Keep this in each employee's personnel file.
- Reinforce policies by giving regular training to employees.
- Between trainings, hold regular staff meetings. At the meetings, discuss the rules, recent problem situations, and ways to prevent future problems.
- Advise employees that you will spot check their compliance with the policies. Give them a regular performance review.
- Reward employees who do a good job. Provide rewards to those who engage in anti-drug events.

Remember: Written policies, good communication, and a supportive environment will go a long way toward the success of your business.



**To: All Employees**  
**From: Management**  
**Subject: Store Policies**

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## **Minors**

- *It is everyone's job to ensure customers who are buying alcohol are at least 21 years of age.*
- We will request proof of age (I.D.) from any customer who appears 30 years of age or younger. To help employees do their job, managers will post the following sign in the business:  
  
"NOTICE: Our employees request I.D. from any customer who appears to be under age 30. Thank you for your cooperation."
- We may accept the following as proof of age:
  - California driver's license
  - California I.D. card  
We may also accept the following documents as I.D., but only if we know what they look like.
  - Federal military I.D. card
  - Other state-issued driver's license or state-issued identification card
- We have the right to, and will, refuse service to any customer who does not have proper I.D.
- We will use a pre-printed age chart as a quick way to figure age. The age chart says, "To Buy or Consume Alcohol, You Must Have Been Born on or Before [date]."

## **Alcohol Sales**

- *Management and supervisors will support employee's decisions to refuse service to any customer. If they don't, employees might not act so responsibly in the future.*
- We will not sell alcohol to any person who looks or acts intoxicated, even if they are not driving. This includes regular customers who may "always act that way."
- Drinking alcohol during your shift, after your shift, or at closing time is not allowed.

- We will not sell high-risk beverages, including fortified wines, wine coolers, 40 oz. beers, or malt liquor. If we do sell these products, we will keep them in sight of the cashier and away from exits to prevent "grab and runs."
- We will not sell single units of alcohol because this promotes the portable drinking of alcohol. It also makes it easier for teens to purchase alcohol.
- We will display wine coolers with other alcohol products.

## **Safe Rides**

- If a customer is intoxicated we will ask the person if they are driving and help them get a safe ride. If the customer refuses, the employee should call 1-800-TELL-CHP to report the drunk driver.

## **Good Neighbor Policies**

- As required by law, we will abide by the Retail Operating Standards (Form ABC-569) and keep a copy on the premises.
- We will keep our trash receptacles properly covered and emptied regularly (state how often).
- Burned-out light bulbs will be replaced by (state by whom and how soon).

## **Signage**

- We will maintain posted signage as required by State and local laws.
- Windows closest to the cash register will be clear of signage.

## **Interior**

- We will keep interior lighting adequate and bulbs working.
- Merchandise will be neatly and safely displayed and away from exits.
- Countertops will be clear of merchandise clutter.
- Aisles will be free of debris and litter; stock area clean; deli area clean.
- We will not display adult materials (e.g., magazines) to children.

## **Staffing**

- All staff will be trained in responsible beverage sales.
- All staff will be continually updated by management (meetings, memos, etc.).
- We will provide extra training for employees who need practice in selling alcohol.
- All alcohol sellers will read and sign a Clerk's Affidavit, as required by law.
- There will be a manager present during peak purchase hours.
- We will have cashiers over the age of 21 on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Staff will be trained in handling emergencies if the manager/owner is not present.

## **Security**

- *We will allow free access to all law enforcement officers. This includes ABC investigators, police officers, and sheriff deputies, all of whom may be wearing uniforms or plainclothes.*
- Register areas will be kept clear of tall displays that may block the employee's view of the store.
- We will have enough employees on duty. This will help us watch beverage sales and customers. We will advise management when more staff is needed.
- We will not tolerate problem customers. If needed we will call the police or sheriff for help. We will permanently refuse to admit any chronic problem customer.
- We will record any serious problem (such as fights, injuries, or vandalism) in our Incident Log for future reference.
- We will maintain a close working relationship with the police or sheriff. We will maintain emergency numbers (police, fire, store owner/manager) posted near the telephone.
- We will maintain fire extinguishers, properly mounted and readily accessible; properly charged.
- We will keep our street number visible from the road.
- We will keep bushes/trees trimmed to not obstruct view of the store.
- We will keep cash register visible from the outside.
- We will maintain our central alarm system working.

- We will keep surveillance cameras working and review the tapes often.
- We will maintain convex mirrors to view large areas.

## **Community Relations**

- Management will meet often with local law enforcement or ABC officials to stay current on ABC laws and enforcement problems.
- We will have a person assigned to community relations.
- Our community relations person will meet with local patrons and/or groups to determine their shopping needs and concerns.

## **Drug-Free Workplace**

- We will not sell any product knowing it will be used for drug purposes. For example, selling cigarette papers knowing they will be used for rolling marijuana cigarettes; selling small plastic baggies or balloons knowing they will be used for packaging drugs; or selling pipes and screens knowing they will be used for smoking drugs.
- We will not tolerate illicit drug use or sales by customers or employees.
- It is a violation of company policy to possess, sell, trade, or offer illegal drugs for sale or engage in the illegal use of drugs on the job.
- It is a violation of company policy to use or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol at anytime while on or using company property, conducting company business or otherwise representing the company.
- Violations of this policy are subject to (letter of reprimand/suspension from work without pay/dismissal).

## Some Good Resources for a Drug-Free Workplace:

- **ONTRACK At Work:** 1-888-900-4288;  
Free help for small businesses in the State of California.  
Includes help for policy development, management/supervisory training, and employee awareness information. Funded by the California Department of Alcohol & Drug Programs.  
[www.ontrackatwork.net](http://www.ontrackatwork.net)
- Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance:  
(202) 366-3784. Department of Transportation  
<http://www.mcs.dot.gov/>
- Employee Assistance Professionals Association, Inc.:  
(703) 522-6272. Provides contact information for local employee assistance professionals.
- Workplace Helpline: 1-800-WORKPLACE. Provides individualized technical assistance to businesses and unions in the development of workplace substance abuse programs.
- Substance Abuse Program Administrators Association:  
1-800-672-7229. Represents professional administrators of workplace drug and alcohol programs.





## **Employee Responsibility Statement**

### **Employee: Read and Sign**

I understand that our business is dedicated to the safe and responsible sale and service of alcohol.

I will not knowingly serve alcohol to an underage or obviously intoxicated person.  
I will report any signs of illegal drug activity to management.

I have read and understand our policies. I understand that if I follow these policies, management will fully support my decisions.

I also recognize that my failure to follow these policies may result in job probation, suspension, loss of hours, or termination from this employment.

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Employee Signature

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Date